

AGENDA ITEM 2 A
Action Item

TIMED ITEM

1:05 PM

PUBLIC HEARING

MEMORANDUM

DATE: June 4, 2020
TO: El Dorado County Transit Authority
FROM: Brian James, Planning and Marketing Manager
SUBJECT: Public Hearing on Proposed Fare Changes

REQUESTED ACTION:
BY MOTION,

- 1. Open Public Hearing on the El Dorado County Transit Authority Proposed Temporary Fare Changes**
- 2. Accept Public Comment**
- 3. Close Public Hearing**
- 4. Approve Proposed Temporary Fare Changes, as provided herein**

BACKGROUND

The El Dorado County Transit Authority (El Dorado Transit) Title VI Program, adopted December 5, 2019, Section D, states the following: “It is the intent of El Dorado Transit to comply with the Federal Public Comment on Fare Change policy cited in Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Section C. 9030.1C. For the purpose of FTA Section C. 9030.1C comment requirement, El Dorado Transit’s definition of a fare change is a change of any amount compared to existing fare.”

On April 4, 2020, El Dorado Transit suspended the collection of fares on its public services to facilitate social distancing and lessen the immediate financial impacts to riders due to the COVID-19 pandemic. This suspension of fares was an emergency response measure and is not financially sustainable long term or compliant with current State funding regulations. As such, the proposed El Dorado Transit Fiscal Year (FY) 2020/21 Operating Budget includes some revenue from passenger fares, although significantly less than originally projected due to an anticipated reduction in ridership.

In the Western El Dorado County 2019 Short- and Long-Range Transit Plan (SLRTP), developed before the COVID-19 outbreak, discounted monthly passes and fares were considered as a means to make transit more attractive to potential riders and frequent passengers. At the time, fare reductions were recommended to help increase regular ridership, likely decreasing single occupancy vehicle trips and reducing greenhouse gas emissions in the County. Given

these potential benefits, the fare discounts proposed below can be supported with grant funding from the Low Carbon Transit Operations Program (LCTOP).

In accordance with the Title VI public notice requirements, staff is bringing forth proposed temporary fare changes for public review and comment, per the following schedule:

- May 1, 2020 El Dorado Transit posted advanced notice of the public hearing on May 1, 2020 in the Mountain Democrat, and information regarding the fare changes was posted in the buses and on the El Dorado Transit website
- May 1-June 4, 2020 Public Comment Period
- June 4, 2020 Public Hearing at El Dorado Transit regularly scheduled Board meeting

DISCUSSION

In keeping with the 2019 SLRTP recommendations and to continue to reduce costs for riders during the recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic, El Dorado Transit staff is proposing to make the following temporary fare structure changes, conditional on approval of the LCTOP grant application that was submitted to Caltrans in April 2020:

Service	Current Fares	Proposed Fares
Local Fixed Routes	Monthly Pass \$60.00	Monthly Pass \$30.00
	Monthly Discount Pass \$30.00	Monthly Discount Pass \$15.00
	SacRT/EDT Combo Pass \$110.00	SacRT/EDT Combo Pass \$80.00
	SacRT/EDT Discount Combo Pass \$80.00	SacRT/EDT Discount Combo Pass \$65.00
		New Connect Card Daily Max \$4.50
		New Connect Card Discount Daily Max \$2.25
Commuter Routes	Sac State/Folsom Lake College Student with I.D. \$4.00	Sac State/Folsom Lake College Student with I.D. \$0.00
	Student K-12 \$180.00 Monthly Pass or \$5.00 per Boarding	Student K-12 \$0.00 with Local Fixed Route Monthly Pass

The LCTOP grant project is good for one (1) year and may be renewed each year for up to five (5) years. The proposed temporary fare changes are scheduled to become effective Saturday, August 1, 2020, in conjunction with the planned reinstatement of fare collection, and could extend through the end of the fiscal year or until grant funds are expended.

In addition to the monthly pass discounts, the proposed Connect Card Daily Max is a new fare incentive that caps the daily amount charged to each passenger for their one-way trips when they pay using their Connect Card cash purse. The daily max rate is set at the equivalent cost of three (3) one-way cash fares. Once the daily max fare amount is met, a day pass is effectively triggered on the card and all boardings for the rest of the day will be free for that card holder.

The Daily Max will help encourage passengers to use Connect Card and will make boarding more efficient.

As of May 27, 2020, El Dorado Transit has not received any public responses regarding the temporary fare changes. All responses received before the Board Meeting on June 4, 2020 will be reported at the Board Meeting.

FISCAL IMPACT

The Fiscal Year (FY) 2019/20 LCTOP allocation represents a total of \$50,000 in potential grant revenue to replace discounted fare revenue. This grant amount is included in the FY 2020/21 Operating Budget.